LABOUR MONTHLY

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Editor: R. Palme Dutt

TOGETHER FOR PEACE NOW!

'Naked in the Conference'

Ivor Montagu (British Peace Committee)

Why we are marching

Anna Steele (Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament)

Peace in my time

Jim Arnison (Building Trades Federation Steward)

LENIN
by R. Palme Dutt

IF SHARKS WERE HUMAN
by Bertolt Brecht

DEFEND CLAUSE 4
by R. W. Wright

FAILURE OF THE 'MIXED ECONOMY'
by John Eaton

APRIL · 1960

One Shilling and Sixpence

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PACE-MAKERS

MARCHING along for peace behind the teenagers, I always find myself looking round for Jenny. Yet it is foolish to expect to recognise her. The last time we met she was not yet two years old. Her shivering bomb-shocked mother thrust her into my arms, crying: 'Here, mind Jenny for me!' and ran to the doctor's surgery, seeking grannie amongst the long line of casualties. So Jenny and I waited in the Camden Town street, the choking dust after the rocket still fogging the summer sun that Sunday morning. I picked bits of glass out of her hair and held her close when the wounded stumbled by, blackened and bleeding, not recognising their own neighbour. I turned away from the rubble of her home, from the sickening glimpse of artificial limbs spilt from the show window on the corner, the sluggish stream from the overturned milk-float. But Jenny made no sound. She stayed quiet in my arms and went on looking at the wreckage of familiar things. She gave me the same grave look when her mother claimed her back, saying bitterly: 'If only her dad could see her now!' But he had left for Normandy three weeks before, to seek out and destroy the Nazi rocket bases. No, I don't think I shall recognise Jenny amongst the seventeen-year-olds at Aldermaston. But she is there all the same, in thousands; determined, cheerful, enthusiastic, knowing the score and confident of victory, with all the energy and high hopes of youth. We shall have to move fast to keep up with these pace-makers of peace, who are going to build a shining Socialist future out of today's shoddy rubble.

What a contrast, this youthful sanity, with what a Scottish-Canadian reader calls 'the suicidal maniacs who hope to re-arm the Nazis of Western Germany with nuclear weapons—and blackmail mankind with Nazi nuclear aggression'. How best to support the young people's efforts and help them to grasp the whole picture and avoid the mistakes of seeing only a part of the struggle, of disunity and the deadly trap of red-baiting? Young people only reject politics when they can see nothing but a dingy substitute for a real prospect, which seems indistinguishable from the established things-as-they-are. If all they are offered is the same old 'mixed economy' amidst a barrage of lies about the socialist world and the colonial peoples' struggle, little wonder if a handful become 'mixed-up beatniks'. They have to battle their way to understanding through a blare of 'press and radio polluted by nuclear deterrent poison talk', in the words of our Scottish-Canadian. These propaganda organs give a Yorkshire reader 'mental nausea, which L.M., like a breath of fresh air, effectively staves off'.

It is always a pleasure to us to see the impact that L.M. has when put in the hands of active thinking young people like these. I had a letter just recently from a young building worker who finds it 'a marvel of lucidity'. Another letter from a Londoner who has been taking it only since July, and found it 'such a fund of information and a heart-warmer besides' that he demanded back numbers. Now he is out to see 'circulation increases and the lifeblood of true socialism continuing to course through L.M.'s pages for the rest of the time left between now and socialism's triumph in Britain. And here's a donation as a small expression of gratitude for a great socialist magazine'. The same spirit of confidence and optimism comes from the letter of a very busy doctor,

(Continued on page iii of cover)

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Notes of the Month

LENIN AFTER 90 YEARS

No force can dim the torch which Lenin kindled in the stifling darkness of a crazy world.

Maxim Gorki.

NINETY years have passed since the birth of Lenin. With the passage of years many names famed in their day grow less. Some grow greater. Lenin's place in history—already sufficiently established by common standards—is only beginning to approach its future fuller recognition as mankind passes into communism. Lenin was not only the outstanding genius and teacher of the modern era—the era of the most decisive change in human history. By the creative activity of his leadership, carrying forward the teachings of Marxism, through the formation of the Communist Party as the organ of the working class leading all the oppressed masses for social change, and through the first victory of the socialist revolution, Lenin was the greatest builder of the modern world. Not of the old world which is dying in a stink of corruption and dreams of suicidal violence. But of the new world which is arising, of hundreds and hundreds of millions of human beings who have broken the fetters of age-old slavery and barbarous brutality and entered into freedom and abounding new life thanks above all to the work of Lenin.

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Assassin's Bullet

Had Lenin lived the span of that noble veteran fighter for freedom, who is still with us, William Du Bois, he would have lived to see this world of achievement today. He would have covered the full range from the still flourishing capitalism of Marx's *Capital* at the time of his birth and early days, to its outcome and degeneration in imperialism and the first world war, the first victory of the world socialist revolution, the savagery of counter-revolution and fascism and the second world war, the new triumphs of socialist and national liberation extending over the world, and the tense choice today between peaceful co-existence or destructive war. His life was cut short prematurely, at the height of his achievement, through the consequences of the bullet fired by the 'Socialist Revolutionary' assassin, the daughter of the bourgeoisie, inspired by the Western-organised campaign of terrorism and assassination (on the same day Uritsky was shot), and subsequently idolised and glorified by the prophets of Western civilisation, just as their forefathers previously idolised and glorified Charlotte Corday, the assassin of Marat.

From Violence to More Violence

Characteristic indeed are the weapons which the representatives of the old ruling order, the self-styled apostles of 'civilisation' and 'superior morality', use against the spokesmen of the working class and popular struggle for social justice. Jaurès—murdered to make way for the first world war. Liebknecht and Rosa Luxembourg—murdered to make way for Social-Democracy followed by Hitler. It is ironic, for the choice of methods, that the Secretary of the old inter-war 'Labour and Socialist International', Fritz Adler, preaching endless sermons against the Bolsheviks for their 'violent methods' of organised mass struggle to defeat capitalist violence, himself won his original fame by assassinating the Austrian Prime Minister. In the United States the chain of violent death for the champions of human freedom ranges in an endless line from John Brown and Abraham Lincoln, through the Chicago Martyrs and Joe Hill, to Sacco and Vanzetti and Julius and Ethel Rosenberg in our day. All this pales beside the colonial record, or the extermination of millions in the incinerators of Nazism, that darling of the most cultured representatives of Western civilisation, now being built up anew in the hope of fulfilling similar tasks.

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On the occasion of the 90th Anniversary of Lenin's birth, we publish this new portrait of Lenin. Next month we shall print some recollections of him by his widow Nadezhda Krupskaya, recently published for the first time, and especially translated for *Labour Monthly*.

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Auschwitz Reminder

At the Auschwitz commemoration ceremony this year—that Auschwitz camp where four millions from all over Europe were done to death—attended by 20,000 participants from 13 countries, including British M.Ps, survivors wept on the shoulders of the Soviet Colonel Yelisavietsky, himself a Jew, the Liberator of Auschwitz: a symbol of the socialist liberation of humanity from the horrors of the dying Western social order. What need of incinerators today? Western civilisation initiated the atom bomb, and is now advancing to the public advocacy of wholesale lethal poison gases, chemical, bacteriological and biological warfare as exceeding the old obsolescent nuclear weapons in the glorious aim of mass extermination. Lenin gave his whole genius and his whole life to save mankind from these horrors of destruction and win a different future.

Light on Lenin

Many readers have written in to say how they were struck by that prediction of Lenin which we quoted in these Notes in February, when, during his interview with H. G. Wells forty years ago he threw his gaze into the future and stated that the coming of the era of inter-planetary travel would bring within reach the end of violence in human affairs. They were struck, not merely because this prediction, so little noted or understood at the time, has become so topical today, in the era of the simultaneous sweep forward of the lunik and the new concrete urgency of disarmament. They were struck because of the contrast of this communist outlook on the future with the grisly imaginings of the more commonplace type of Anglo-American purveyors of 'sci-fic', who could only see in the advance of science the opening of the gates to new inter-planetary wars and destruction. They were struck above all by the light that it threw on the whole foundation of the character and outlook of Lenin, which has been too little recognised by the shallow, that deep humanism which even the chatterers today, who used to prattle of the aridity of Marx and Marxism, are beginning now to rediscover in Marx.

Lenin's Communism

Listen to Gorki on Lenin:

I have never met... nor do I know of any man who hated, loathed and despised so deeply and strongly as Lenin all unhappiness, grief and suffering.

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And Gorki, that greatest twentieth century master of understanding of the hearts of men and women, continues:

> Lenin was exceptionally great in my opinion precisely because of this feeling in him of irreconcilable, unquenchable hostility towards the sufferings of humanity, his burning faith that suffering is not an essential and unavoidable part of life, but an abomination which people ought and are able to sweep away.

That is the spirit of Communism. That is what Communism means.

Lenin on Capitalism

Lenin's whole life activity was governed, not merely by feeling, by his deep hatred of human suffering and determination to end it, or by sentimental aspirations for a happier future, but by the scientific understanding (Marxism) that the only road to end human suffering and win a happier future lies through the accomplishment of the historical task of our epoch to end capitalism and replace it by socialism as the first stage to a free communist society. Lenin learned from Marx that the capitalist social system, once such a mighty engine of progress, and still so vaunted by its bat-eyed latter day apologists, belonged to the dustbin of history. He wrote:

> Our grandchildren will look on the documents and memorials of the capitalist system as curiosities. It will be difficult for them to imagine how it was that trade and articles of prime necessity could be in the hands of private ownership, how it was that factories and workshops could belong to individuals, how it was that one man could exploit another, how it was that people could exist who did no work.

Of course Mr. Gaitskell has now informed us, speaking to Leeds students on March 11, that there is no longer a capitalist class ('if people thought there was a capitalist class and a working class they did not know the true position'), since '99·9 per cent of the people are working' and there is 'virtually no class left that does no work that is capable of working' (*The Times*, March 12, 1960). Certainly. If Sir Gorgious Midas, in the intervals between his prolonged holidays to catch the sun in Bermuda or the Canary Islands, totters in for an hour in the morning to attend a board of directors before proceeding to lunch at his club, he also is 'working' in the Gaitskellian definition and is therefore 'not a capitalist'. Mr. Gaitskell undoubtedly belongs to the 'curiosities' of our time that our grandchildren will view with some amazement.

Lenin on the Socialist Revolution

But Lenin equally understood that capitalism, like every previous social system, does not perish of itself, however out-dated, however harmful. Capitalism has to be destroyed and replaced by socialism

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through conscious human action. The destruction of capitalism, every day more urgent as the horrors of its declining years spread a sum of human misery unparalleled by all the pestilences and calamities of the human record and even threaten the human race with extinction, can only be accomplished along the difficult and arduous road, lasting over decades, of struggle and organisation, the organisation of the working class and its leadership, political clarity of the goal, leadership of the struggle of all sections of the people and the great national liberation struggles, to the final victory of the world socialist revolution. Lenin wrote:

> Outside of socialism there is no deliverance of humanity from wars, from hunger, from the destruction of millions and millions of human beings.
>
> (Lenin, 'In Louis Blanc's Footsteps', *Pravda*, April 21, 1917.)

Lenin on Revisionism

At the time when Lenin entered into political activity, during the last decade of the nineteenth century, there was a great deal of fashionable talk about the 'new capitalism' which was supposed to have rendered Marx out of date. The sponsors of this view, first put forward by the Fabians, and picked up from them by Bernstein and spread through continental Social-Democracy, were known as 'Revisionists'. Contemporary capitalism, according to them, so far from leading to a 'catastrophic' outcome (their term for the revolutionary analysis), was entering a new era of general prosperity, diminution of crises and class contradictions, and improvement of social conditions, rendering the old goal of socialism a superfluous myth ('the goal is nothing, the movement is everything', as Bernstein said). This was before 1914 dealt their illusions a blow. Against them were ranged the so-called 'Orthodox', or upholders of Marxism. Lenin entered with full energy into the battle against revisionism and on the side of Marxism. He exposed without mercy, not merely in general principle, but with concrete contemporary facts the fallacies of the revisionists. But he had no time for the dogmatic outlook which seeks to defy contemporary reality with abstract formulas. Instead, he set himself to examine, with a thousand times more care and precision than the shoddy generalisations of the revisionists, the new phenomena of twentieth century capitalism, not in order to abandon theory and surrender to capitalism, as the revisionists did, but in order to carry forward the theory of Marx in the same way as Marx ceaselessly did, that is, to master at each new turn the ever-changing, ever-developing, reality.

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Lenin on Twentieth Century Capitalism

It was on this basis that Lenin was able to draw together into a single theoretical understanding the multiple divers phenomena of twentieth century capitalism, which had previously been seen only superficially in a series of miscellaneous unrelated aspects (the 'new imperialism', social reform, trusts and trust-busting, state intervention in industry, 'labour unrest', the colonial question, nationalism, the arms race). He showed how the guiding thread was the development of capitalism, through the operation of the laws of capitalism laid bare by Marx, from the era of liberal free trade capitalism to monopoly capitalism or imperialism, and eventually state monopoly capitalism. He showed further that this new era of imperialism was no era of diminishing contradictions and extending prosperity and peaceful reform, as the Revisionists imagined. It would prove the era, he asserted, of decaying, parasitic, dying capitalism; of all the contradictions carried to their most extreme point; of the subjection and enslavement of all nations of the world to a handful of dominant powers, and their rising revolt; of inter-imperialist conflict flaring out to world war on a scale never before known; of the opening of the world socialist revolution. The experience of the first six decades of this century has proved that what Lenin said was true. The revisionists were wrong.

Lenin on the Twentieth Century World Wars

All the fashionable memoirs of the upper class celebrities of the period speak of the world before 1914 as if it has been a 'golden age' of peaceful serenity and progress blissfully unconscious of the holocaust in front which was to wipe out a generation. This conventional prattle is either plain hypocrisy, if the writers played any role in politics (for the air was thick with the clangour of the arms race, war preparations and the forging of the rival military alliances), or a revelation of how sheltered was their childhood in the nurseries of the imperialist paradise at the top of the pyramid of exploitation from the cruel realities of the living world. But none saw the meaning of the coming war with such merciless clarity of vision as Lenin. Gorki relates a conversation with him in 1908 in Paris:

> He brought forward a series of arguments for the imminence of war, and 'probably not of one, but of a whole series of wars'. 'War is coming, it is inevitable. The capitalist world has reached the stage of putrescent fermentation. I think we shall yet see a general European war. The

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proletariat will hardly be able to find in itself the strength to avert the carnage... The proletariat of course will suffer terribly. Such must be its fate for some time yet. But its enemies will weaken each other; that also is inevitable'.

'For some time yet'. The truth of that was shown in the first world war and the second world war.

'In the End They Will Gain'

And then Gorki's moving account of that conversation in 1908 goes on to reveal how this vision of Lenin was no mere cold-blooded logical analysis of the approaching imperialist war and its outcome. Long before Barbusse and Remarque and Sassoon, Lenin saw and felt with all the passionate intensity of his being those ten million dead of the first world war slaughtered without a cause.

Coming up to me he said forcibly, but not loudly, as if in amazement: 'No, but think of it. Why should people who are well-fed force hungry ones to fight against each other? Could you name a more idiotic or revolting crime? The workers will pay a dreadfully heavy price for this. But in the end they will gain. It is the will of history.'

'In the end they will gain'. The truth of that too has been proved by the event.

Tested by Experience

The truth of Lenin's vision has been tested by experience in the crucible of history, alike through the first world war and the victory of the Russian socialist revolution, not only by the fulfilment of the outcome that he foresaw, but by the direct role of Lenin's leadership in action to master the event and guide that outcome. In the breakdown of the old forms of the international socialist movement under the impact of the first world war, whose blazing heat shrivelled up and exposed forever the rottenness of opportunism and revisionism, it was the leadership of Lenin and the Bolshevik Party above all that carried forward the whole international movement and saved the world. The victory of the socialist revolution in Russia, followed by its reflection in revolutions in Germany and Central Europe, brought the endlessly protracted first imperialist world war to an end at a time when the military staffs on both sides were planning new holocausts for 1919 in their grand strategy of 'attrition'.

Guidance for Today

And today? Lenin's guidance still points the way forward in the new conditions—not as an empty formula to repeat the past,

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but carried forward, as he would have carried it forward, in the new world balance of forces. Failure to carry through the socialist revolution in Western and Central Europe, and the restoration of the old order and capitalism in these countries thanks to the role of Social-Democracy, brought fascism and the second world war on an even more destructive scale, as Lenin had warned. Once again the workers had to 'pay a dreadfully heavy price for this'. Once again 'in the end they gained'. The victory of socialism over one third of the world, and the miracles of scientific and technical construction since achieved, mean that at last imperialism no longer dominates the world. Therefore there is the real possibility to prevent the third world war and win peaceful co-existence. But the revival and open expansionist aims of West German militarism with Western backing at this moment, and the aggressive and ever-increasingly desperate and reckless military plans of powerful circles in the West, show that the biggest hurdles are in front.

Lenin on the World Revolution

Lenin always emphasised that the socialist revolution is no sudden overnight change, but comprises a whole historical epoch over many decades of the most varied and divers form of struggle, gains and losses, successes and defeats, in the advance to the victory of the working class and all the oppressed peoples against imperialism and the building of the new social order. 'The transition from capitalism to socialism occupies an entire historical epoch' (Lenin, *The Proletarian Revolution*). And more fully:

> The socialist revolution cannot take place in any other form than that of an epoch, uniting the civil war of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie in the leading countries with a whole series of democratic, revolutionary and national-emancipatory movements in the undeveloped, backward and oppressed countries. Why is this? It is because capitalism develops unequally.
>
> (Lenin, *On a Caricature of Marxism and Imperialist Economism.*)

For Lenin the national liberation movement of the Asian, African and Latin American peoples against imperialism, always a part of the world democratic movement, was from 1917 an integral part of the world socialist revolution. Herein lies and has always lain one of the most decisive differences of the communist outlook from the narrow egocentric outlook of the old Second International and Social-Democracy, focused on Western Europe and the United States as the hub of the world. Only now in the face of world-wide revolt have they awoken in a flurry to offer charity from the crumbs

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of imperialist plunder, but never to stop the plunder. In vain. The Macmillans and Gaitskells will not succeed to stem the tide of revolt. The world revolution will conquer through the union of socialism and the national liberation movements; for these represent the overwhelming majority of the human race.

Fifty Years On

Already Marx had given warning of this character of the world socialist revolution as comprising a whole historical epoch.

> We say to the workers: 'You will have to go through fifteen, twenty, fifty years of civil wars and international wars, not only in order to change existing conditions, but also in order to change yourselves and fit yourselves for the exercise of political power'.
>
> (Marx, *Revelations on the Communist Trial at Cologne,* 1851.)

A profound thought when we consider the entire character and experience of our age, and not merely a very temporary and unstable corner of sheltered prosperity of a small privileged section in a minute minority sector of the imperialist world. The experience of the Somme and Guernica, of napalm and the H-bomb, of two world wars and world economic crisis, of fascism and white Terror and the extermination chambers, of the international solidarity of the war against fascism in Spain, of the liberating inspiration of the great anti-fascist alliance and joint victory with the socialist world, of the bitter fruits of Social-Democracy throwing away the fruits of victory and rebuilding German militarism, of the new experiences of the fight for peace against nuclear war—all these have helped to shape and are shaping, despite all the lies and indoctrination of capitalist mass propaganda, that strength and that consciousness which shall finally win the victory for the cause of the working people and socialism.

For Peace and Socialism

Since 1917 forty-two years have passed. Marx's 'fifty years' would bring us to 1967. By that date, if we can prevent major war, there is every prospect that socialism will be well on the way to overtaking and leaving behind, not merely the average levels of productivity and living standards of the capitalist world (that has long ago been accomplished), but of the most advance privileged apex of the capitalist world, so that the economic superiority of socialism will have been finally and inescapably demonstrated to all, and the decisive battle will have been won. This close goal within reach can be realised if we succeed in preventing that third

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world war which the nuclear maniacs of the dying Western social order still openly and suicidally plan. That is why the fight for peace is at this moment the heart of the world socialist revolution.

Lenin on Britain

Like Marx before him, Lenin paid special attention to the problems of Britain and the British labour movement. Lenin understood very well the reasons why the classic country of capitalism, Britain, once the leading world industrial power, should have fallen behind in the race with newer capitalist powers like the United States and Germany. He understood equally why the British working class, which had once led the way as the pioneer of the international working class movement with the epic struggles of Chartism and the foundations of the trade unions, should have later lagged behind and remained under the yoke of landlordism and capitalism, while younger working class movements, arriving later in the field, had already advanced to the victory of socialism. The very advantage of the former privileged position, of the world industrial monopoly and colonial monopoly, became a disadvantage. The world tribute led to stagnation of technique and development at home of British capitalism compared to younger competitors. Similarly the relatively privileged condition of a section of the workers on the same foundation, providing 'relatively tolerable petty bourgeois conditions of life' within which they were more interested to struggle for further improvements of those conditions than to change the social order, furnished the basis for the domination of an opportunist leadership in the service of capitalism and rewarded with rich plums.

Lenin on the British Revolution

But Lenin equally showed that the inevitable undermining of this old privileged position of British capitalism was bringing and would further bring profound changes in the political situation in Britain and in the character of the British working class movement. The loss of the world industrial monopoly in the eighteen-eighties brought the beginning of the pioneer socialist movement, which has since become the Communist Party. The opening of the imperialist era brought the foundation of the Labour Party. The victory of the Russian socialist revolution brought the adoption of the aim of common ownership in the constitution of the Labour Party and the unification of the militant socialist movement in the Communist

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Party. In the solution of the problems involved in the foundation of the Communist Party, as the indispensable organisation of the Marxist vanguard, and at the same time of its relations with the Labour Party in order to assist the advance of the broad movement to socialist political consciousness and the fight for socialism, Lenin gave unwearying personal guidance and help.

Slowness and Sharp Turns

Lenin understood very well the slowness of development arising from the conditions in Britain:

> All the best revolutionary elements in the working class who are dissatisfied with the slow progress of development, which in England perhaps will be slower than in other countries, will come over to us. Development is slow because the British bourgeoisie is in a position to create better conditions for the aristocracy of labour and by that to retard the progress of the revolution. (Lenin, *Speech to the Second Congress of the Communist International, August* 6, 1920.)

At the same time he indicated that the character of the crisis in Britain could very suddenly give rise to the proletarian revolution:

> Take England, for example. We cannot say, and no one is in a position to say beforehand, how soon the real proletarian revolution will flare up and *what* will serve as the *cause* to rouse it, to kindle it and move into the struggle very wide masses who are at present dormant. Hence, it is our duty to carry on our preparatory work in such a manner as to be 'well shod on all four feet', as the late Plekhanov was fond of saying when he was a Marxist and revolutionary. It is possible that a parliamentary crisis will cause the 'breach', will 'break the ice'; perhaps it will be a crisis caused by the hopelessly entangled and increasingly painful and acute colonial and imperialist contradictions; perhaps some third cause, etc. We are not discussing the kind of struggle that will *determine* the fate of the proletarian revolution in England (not a single Communist has any doubts on that score, so far as we are concerned, this question is settled and definitely settled). What we are discussing is the *cause* that will rouse the at present dormant proletarian masses and bring them right up to the revolution. (Lenin, *Left-Wing Communism,* 1920.)

It is only necessary to recall the experience of Suez in the recent period, or of the general strike in an earlier period, to see in an embryonic form how rapidly such occasions can arise even in the conditions of Britain.

Seeking the Path

Through all the changed circumstances as they have developed the underlying principle of Lenin's approach holds good. The necessity for the active fighters for socialism to be united, organised

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and ready to respond to every type of shifting situation, whether in a period of relatively lower and more limited level of mass struggle, or suddenly flaring out to a major political situation and even crisis of the regime. Never to be discouraged by slowness of development ('It is much more difficult—and much more useful—to be a revolutionary when the conditions for direct, open really mass and really revolutionary struggle have not yet matured'). Above all, in the conditions of a country such as Britain, to find the bridge of contact with the broad not yet revolutionary movement, to find that transitional programme which can help to carry forward the fight of the working people on the way to more basic aims:

> The main task of contemporary communism in Western Europe and America is to acquire the ability to find, to outline and to carry out a concrete, not quite revolutionary plan of measures and methods for *leading* the masses to the real, determined last and great revolutionary struggle.
>
> (Lenin, *Left-Wing Communism.*)

The past decades have enriched experience in the approach to this problem. At the critical point now reached, when the British people can play such a key role in the choice of peace or war, when the choice between the aim of social ownership or the repudiation of that aim has become the foremost issue before all the organisations of the trade union and labour movement, it is more than ever necessary for all those, of whatever school or current of thought, who stand for the aim of socialism, for the victory of the working class, for the defeat of nuclear war, to find the basis and means of co-operation in a common fight.

'The Times' and Lenin

When Lenin died, *The Times* wrote in January, 1924:

> It may be said with confidence that a disintegrating process has begun which will lead to the total collapse of the party. The end is probably only a matter of months.

That was thirty-six years ago. 'The end' of Communism which *The Times* so triumphantly prophesied as due within 'a matter of months' has not come. Communism is stronger than ever, extends more and more widely over the world, will win through finally also in Britain, as the peoples of the world, including in Britain, will become more and more convinced by experience of its necessity. The battle over social ownership now raging in the trade unions and the Labour Party (and the latest 'compromise' reached at the March meeting of the Labour Party Executive will hardly end the battle) is only a preliminary symptom and symbol of the deeper

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issues and changes which are preparing in Britain, whose further development will assuredly prove that Lenin's confidence in the final outcome in Britain will be justified by the event.

R.P.D.

March 16, 1960.

ADVICE — GOOD AND BAD

You've got to hand it to the Fleet Street papers; they know it all! They know how trade unionists should run their unions, how the Labour Party should run the Labour Party and how the housewife should spend her money. It would be a most foolish housewife or trade unionist or Labour man who took their advice. But what confusion Fleet Street manage to spread on matters large and small! Which lends considerable point to the views of a London railwayman expressed during the course of our efforts to expand sales to his fellow-workers with our March number which was almost a railwayman's 'special'. He said, Labour Monthly *should be regarded as the theoretical magazine of the left in the Labour movement, with particular appeal to Labour Party workers. Here, he says, there are thousands working away up and down the country, fighting hard on this issue and that and looking for guidance on the complex issues of the day. What is urgently needed, in his view, is a consistent effort by* L.M. *readers to show* Labour Monthly *to the active people, busily campaigning; to discuss the articles with them and win them for regular readers of the magazine which month in and month out shows the way forward and clears away the confusions ceaselessly created by the ruling class press.*

Campaigning for peace, for example, is more than a matter of saying 'Ban the Bomb'. Effective and successful campaigns are possible only if we active campaigners know fully the character and strength of the forces against us. In this number Ivor Montagu, Anna Steele and Jim Arnison provide invaluable facts and telling arguments. Let's use them wisely and well. And plan, too, to use the May, June, July and succeeding numbers as part of a patient, persistent effort to win, each of you, one new reader. We will guarantee the quality that, with your help, will swell the quantity of L.M. *readers.*

G.B.

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'NAKED IN THE CONFERENCE CHAMBER'

Ivor Montagu

IT was Aneurin Bevan's nightmare that without the bomb and the alliance he might have to go 'naked into the conference chamber'. Yet it is in exactly that goose-pimply condition that this country has had to embark on the disarmament conversations that began in Geneva in the middle of March; and its state of total defencelessness is not merely in spite of, but enhanced by, the latest developments of nuclear arms and NATO. Exactly how bare we are you may read in two documents at a cost of two shillings.* The cost of the nudity therein described has been rather more, perhaps £25,000,000,000 spent over a period of fifteen years.

To take first the document which deals with Civil Defence for London.

Evacuation. Work on the 1950 plans has been in abeyance since 1953. In 1956 the government increased its estimate of the number of people moving from 4,000,000 to up to 12,000,000; but 'no request to prepare a scheme on the new basis has yet been received'.

Shelter. If reasonable shelter against blast were provided 'casualties would be reduced by 75 per cent', but 'there is no plan for provision of public shelter in anticipation of war'. White Papers on Defence have made it clear that 'the government did not contemplate any expenditure of this kind'.

Fire-fighting arrangements. Men: 'only about one-tenth of the peace-time establishment'. Appliances: 'resources needed to contain the potential fire situation have been seriously underestimated'. Water: mainly natural supplies like the Serpentine; artificial containers

> for which provision has so far been made are sufficient in quantity only for training purposes.

Rescue Section. Peace-time establishment 10,800; present number of volunteers 552. Policy:

> in the event of war the rescue service would rely for its mobility on the requisitioning of trade vans of suitable size.

Principal equipment?

> pick, shovel, crowbar, rope, etc... Some of these have been developed in a specialised form particularly suited to the rescue task. It is under-

*Report on Defence 1960, Cmnd. 952, H.M.S.O., 1s. London County Council General Purposes Committee, Report No. 1 in Agenda Paper (No. 4) for March 8, 1960, County Hall, 1s.

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stood from the Home Office that some stocks exist of the earlier types of these, but that so far there has been no stockpiling of the more recent patterns.

Ambulance and Casualty collecting section. Peace-time establishment 5,800, so far about 1,600 volunteers. And 'plans involve the virtual emptying of the central London hospitals'. Transport vehicles with stretcher-carrying fitments are 'adequate in number for the training of the volunteers so far recruited'.

Care of homeless. The report lays stress on the

> necessity to keep people under cover . . . since even if unhurt by the explosion they would quickly become casualties from radiation sickness . . . over much of the area surrounding the initial explosion radioactive fall-out may prohibit movement for 48 hours or more.

So far, therefore, '200 rest centres, each capable of taking 200 or more homeless' have been 'earmarked'.

Emergency feeding. 800 premises are 'earmarked'. Ministerial 'guidance is awaited. . . Policy at that level is still in process of formation and discussion'.

> If, as might well be the case, virtually the whole surviving population were in need of emergency feeding during the first weeks after the explosion, the demands on manpower would be extremely great . . . it can be expected that volunteers would be called on from the general public.

In other words, dear general public, there will be no evacuation, no shelter, virtually no fire-fighting, no medical attention, no aftercare, no food and no water. In fact, you are expendable and this is your obituary. No wonder *The Times,* (March 8, 1960) suggests that it might be more sensible, and gain more recruits, to drop the whole idea of Civil Defence, and start a modest service for coping with fire, flood, air and rail crashes.

Consider the other document, presented to Parliament by a gentleman who laughably calls himself the Minister for Defence. It has long been recognised and admitted that, if nuclear war should come, not all the Queen's horses and all the Queen's men, to say nothing of the Queen's tanks, guns, rockets, aeroplanes and battleships, would be able to prevent one single one of the shower of nuclear weapons that might be discharged upon this tight (sadly too tight for modern war) little island. It has long been explained that the object of all this armament for which we have paid and are paying is not defence but deterrence. The idea is that, according to the Defence Report, there is a 'continuing Communist military threat'. And, in the split second before extermination by the un-Christian Red, the last dying act of Christian Britain will be to take measures to exterminate a large number of his women and

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children too. (It does not appear to matter that these women and children victims whom we, more like rattlesnake than Christian, are to take it out on, will have had no say in his wicked deed if the said Red is as undemocratic as claimed). No, the mere threat of this possibility will deter him.

The point is: does the Defence Report disclose any serious capacity to strike back? In no way. At present the 'deterrent' depends for delivery on aircraft whose maximum speed makes it certain that only a tiny percentage, if any, could reach an alerted enemy equipped with the latest ground-to-air defensive missiles. Again, their total (200) is by far insufficient to keep perpetually on the move, and invulnerable to a surprise attack, an adequate number to enable that tiny percentage to be an effective figure. Alternatively the 'deterrent' depends for delivery on American missiles, all the emplacements of which are perfectly well-known and easily destructible; a percentage of which missiles can, in any case, be relied upon to fall back on the territory from which they are discharged. There is a lot of talk of the future, which will not alter anything. A warning system, to cost £56,000,000 and give us four minutes notice. (Decisive proof, if anyone thinks it worth building, that at the present time we have not even that much). A Skybolt rocket, to be launched 1,000 miles from aeroplanes, and a Polaris rocket, to be launched from nuclear submarines, neither of which, or their carriers, are yet even on the drawing board, and which as like as not will be obsolete long before they are operational (but after their builders have made millions from them), as the supersonic bomber and the Blue Streak rocket are already. Indeed, an intelligent being on Earth, if such there be, might be forgiven if, after perusing the Defence Report, he were to wonder whether the wicked Red refrains from wiping out Britain not because of a deterrent capacity we do not possess, but because, after all, he happens not to want to?*

NATO, the other vestment relied upon by Nye for clothing, now augments Britain's peril. Weapons development has made its basis obsolete. Its theory was that the presence of G.I.s in Europe, acting as a sort of hostage, would better ensure American involvement, and therefore support for its allies, in case of Soviet attack, than any paper treaty guarantees. But that was in a weapons

*Compare Arthur Horner's famous story, in a lecture delivered to the Imperial Staff College shortly after the war, of his conversation with a Soviet General. Arthur: 'Is it true that just after the war the Soviet armed forces in Europe were much stronger than the Western armed forces?' Soviet General: 'Of course.' Arthur: 'Is it true that, had you wished to, you could easily have swept to the Channel ports and so had Britain at your mercy?' Soviet General: 'Of course.' Arthur: 'Well, why didn't you?' Soviet General: 'How could we? It wouldn't have been cricket.'

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era when America could physically strike from Europe with no risk to its homeland in return. Since the moon rockets, U.S.A. must think twice before bringing destruction on itself for any European quarrel, and the presence of American nuclear weapon sites on European territory only means that territory is liable to become a target in case of an exclusively American interest provoking war. NATO obligations, too, gag and bind British diplomacy to the disregard of British safety; Britain must give Strauss the Shetlands and apologise for him in Spain, shut its eyes to Oberlaender and its ears to Adenauer's demands on Eastern territories; Macmillan must accept snubs over his Berlin compromise proposals and his disengagement plans for Central Europe; British scientists must hold their tongues in face of Teller's falsifications on underground nuclear weapon-tests; Lloyd must find pretexts for de Gaulle's flouting of the United Nations and the Asian-African millions with his Sahara bomb; and pirouette—off-agin, on-agin, off-agin—to Herter's gyrations about high flights to Berlin. Partners must not be criticised, the sacred alliance is become the sacred cow. Britain is not merely bare, pneumonia sneezes are bearing down on her from all sides.

Certainly nudity should induce a sense of reality. But the government prepares for the Disarmament Conference in a peculiar way. Arms estimates up by another £167 millions and as Ormsby Gore prepares to present Mr. Selwyn Lloyd's proposals* for 'total' disarmament, the Defence Report (page 8, para. 20) reassuringly observes: 'Whatever changes may come about in defence policy as a result of either technical developments or disarmament, the Government cannot foresee a time when this country will not need highly-trained professional forces to help us to play our part in world affairs'.

The fact is that it is only in the Bible that the walls of Jericho collapse at the sound of the trumpet, only in Hans Andersen that one small child's voice suffices to show everyone that the Emperor has no clothes. Had it been a real court and not a fairy story one, there would have been plenty of vested interests to shush the child. Today everybody who reflects knows that what we have written here is true. That arms do not now provide security but ensure jeopardy; that the arms race is useless because no future discoveries can be conjectured that will alter that position; that in nuclear war Britain, small in area, dense in concentration of industry and popu-

*They start with renunciation of a weapon that does not yet exist (pie in outer space), an *increase* in present level of U.S. and U.S.S.R. forces, and a series of studies of infinite duration before phase Z is even arrived at.

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lation is doomed and can be made uninhabitable for generations: that its alliances double its danger of involvement and the presence or possession of nuclear weapons redouble its attraction as an object of attack; that whatever they fancy to be the dangers of disarmament and co-existence with communism, these latter are less. But interests financial, social and political battle against recognition of this truth.

Why should the arms magnates admit their vast bills are paid for dross? Why should the Field-Marshals admit they are no longer saviours but a luxurious excresence? How should Gaitskell admit Zilliacus right, or Macmillan that the practical men are Bertie Russell, Jack Priestley and Canon Collins? It is not that any of these want hot war, but their political, social and financial fortunes are bound up with maintaining the lie of the cold war and the fiction that arms are a less danger than disarmament.

Arms used to be for 'defence'. When defence became obsolete their function became 'deterrence'. With the now impossibility of deterrence (*i.e.*, striking back), the generals begin to talk of the necessity—for security, of course—of striking first. They don't want war—oh, no. But only *we* shall be able to impose on them the sanity of risking peace instead of the military logic of making war certain. In 1945 one nuclear-armed power: in 1960, four. How soon, how many more? If you lock four chimpanzees in a room with four typewriters for infinity they will produce the works of Shakespeare. Four-plus naked general staffs locked in one world with an equal number of nuclear weapons will produce serious trouble a good deal sooner.

WHY WE ARE MARCHING

Anna Steele*

THIS Easter 1960 will see again many thousands of people marching in silence past the Atomic Weapons Research Establishment at Aldermaston. There will be few watching us at Aldermaston, a tiny village in the heart of Berkshire, just the anonymous-looking Home Office Police staring from behind the barbed wire, Alsatian police dogs alert and eager. The Research Establishment itself is stark and hideous. It seems to exude evil, and my heart goes out to those whose skill and labour were prostituted in the building of such a monstrous place. It is not unlike

*Miss Anna Steele, as many of our readers will know, is the young Secretary to the London Regional Council of The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament.

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a concentration camp to look at, and indeed its purpose is as foul. I would advise anyone who has not yet seen a rocket base or atomic research establishment to go and have a look, and contemplate the appalling waste of scientific ingenuity and skilled labour in a world of starving children and undeveloped land.

Of course there are still some people who think that the continued testing and manufacture of nuclear weapons is preventing war. They would consider that the scientist working at Aldermaston is doing the hero's job of defending his country against Russian aggression. These people believe in the 'great deterrent', but they forget that to have an effective deterrent you have to be able to convince the potential aggressor that you are prepared, if necessary, to bring your deterrent into play; and that he would be beaten by it. If we are thinking of the Soviet Union as the potential aggressor, there is no doubt that she is vastly superior:

> Unless we bring the nuclear deterrent into play we are bound to be beaten, and if we do bring it into play we are bound to commit suicide.
>
> (Lt. Gen. Sir John Cowley, War Office, 1959.)

Personally, I would be very surprised to find that the Soviet Union had any aggressive intentions towards this country or to the West in general. After all, did not Mr. Macmillan himself state after his brief visit to the U.S.S.R. that he believed that Russia wanted peace? I seem to remember President Eisenhower saying the same thing after Khrushchov's visit to the U.S. The fact that both these statesmen have given their support to an increase of expenditure on arms in Britain and the U.S. seems to give point to those who say that you can never expect the truth from politicians. Logic, however, seems to be on Khrushchov's side when he says that capitalism will destroy itself. For while the socialist countries increase their productivity and the standard of living for their workers, we continue to cripple ourselves economically and morally in an attempt to stay in the arms race. Our old folk continue to live below subsistence level, our sick to be treated in old and filthy hospitals, and our workers to call for a forty hour week while others enjoy their leisure. Worst of all, we continue to live as slaves—slaves to a State that has taken away our right to choose life rather than annihilation. Never before in the history of mankind has there been such a flouting of basic human rights.

The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament stands first and foremost for basic human rights. It believes that the Bomb has been allowed to become the master of man, controlling his destiny, and perpetuating fear and distrust of one to another. However, it is

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not enough to shout 'ban the Bomb' and hope for the best. The Campaign has specific aims that are not only morally right but politically, economically and strategically feasible.

Unilateral nuclear disarmament by Britain is the concept of a break through in the disarmament deadlock designed to achieve a slowing down in the arms race and the prevention of a further spread of nuclear weapons. This would mean: the removal of all nuclear bases from British soil; the cessation of testing, manufacture and storing of nuclear weapons; the discontinuance of H-Bomber patrol flights over the British Isles. All this would create the atmosphere necessary for an international campaign for multilateral disarmament; a nuclear free zone in Europe, including Germany (Rapacki Plan) and a British initiative to strengthen the United Nations and secure the admission of China. It would be impossible for Britain, having taken a unilateral stand, to remain within NATO an alliance based on nuclear strategy and in addition in direct conflict with the Charter of the United Nations. Having freed herself from the economic and political implications of military alliances, Britain would be in a position to resist most strongly, the development of France and Germany as nuclear powers. She would also be able to welcome constructive proposals for disarmament regardless of political expediences.

The resources released by the adoption of this policy would be put to creative work for peace, help to the underdeveloped areas of the world, food to the hungry millions, medical research, etc. It would be possible to improve the conditions at home for young and old and increase the general standard of living for our workers.

This is not a pipe dream; it could be done tomorrow if our statesmen and Generals were capable of adjusting their thinking to meet the new situation. It takes time for old men to realise that the days when disputes could be settled by force are gone forever. It takes time for them to realise that prestige today is not gained by display of military force but by displays of constructive and creative work for peace. De Gaulle is, no doubt, still jumping up and down shouting 'Hurray for France' because she exploded an atomic bomb on African soil, admittedly for prestige purposes. Yet the world condemned France for her action. The day has gone for that type of thinking, it is too dangerous as well as being morally decadent.

When we are marching from Aldermaston this year, similar demonstrations will be taking place in many other countries. The

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international contingent on the Aldermaston march will be bigger than ever. The world is seething with talk of disarmament and Summit Talks. It is up to the people to demonstrate in no uncertain manner their will and determination for peace. Every day in the Campaign offices requests are pouring in asking for details on Aldermaston. More and more trade unions are joining. NATSOPA is the latest. If you have not decided to come, please do so, nothing has ever been of such vital importance. Let us bring London to a standstill and force the Government and the Press to look our way and recognise the fact that a unique movement has grown up under their very noses. A movement so powerful that it cannot any longer be ignored. Those people who look on from the pavements alongside the groups of paranoic Fascists will feel ashamed they did not join us, for the 'lunatic fringe' will be those who stand and stare and shout abuses from the side walks, the mentally healthy will be on the march.

> People all over the world want peace so much that Governments had better get out of the way and let them have it.

(Dwight D. Eisenhower, BBC/ITV Television Broadcast, September, 1959).

PEACE IN MY TIME

Jim Arnison

WHEN Khrushchov put forward his suggestions for total disarmament at the United Nations I remembered reading that similar proposals had been advanced by Litvinov two years after I first saw the light of day. Thirty-three years—and every one of them affected in one way or another by the struggle for peace that was going on before I was born.

I have never lived anywhere where cupboards and drawers were not stuffed with leaflets, pamphlets and manifestos. I remember Pop coming home from a meeting with a swollen fist that had bounced off the chin of a Mosley thug. Mam going off to a Congress at Battersea while two docker comrades, Joe and George, came daily to cook the family meals and do the housework. Joe it was who went to Spain with the International Brigade, trying to prevent the second world war.

That war came however, and my most vivid recollection of it is of standing amid the ruins of Hiroshima not long after the dropping of the now obsolete atom bomb.

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Let the warmakers take note that the age of nuclear weapons has done something else besides making it possible for them to destroy life more easily. It has ushered in the era of international action for peace on a scale that before the war was only a dream. Now the young people of every land gather together at festivals to defy the breeders of hatred and war. Now the peace movement reaches out to all sections of all populations. Now the old stagers, who taught me in my childhood the importance of the struggle for universal peace and disarmament, have been joined by millions the world over.

A small but extremely significant development took place recently among a group of building workers employed by the Salford Direct Works* Department. Imagine a meal break on a building site, men with parcels of sandwiches, drinking tea from tin lids, not very advanced in conditions from the scenes described in *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists.* The dialogue however is very different. They are discussing—Neville Shute and in particular that author's stand against the nuclear horror. From this discussion comes the demand to me as the Federation steward that their shop stewards should organise a public demonstration in support of disarmament.

How fitting that it should come from building workers whose industry is frequently hammered because of the arms race. Take note you warmongers that in this instance the workers were in advance, not merely of a trade union leadership that is too often hesitant to lead, but also in advance of the more militant shop committee that had to pull its socks up and get cracking—including me, with all the years I have had at it!

In looking at these developments it must strike home how futile, unnecessary and dangerous it is to have divisions between the various sections of the peace movement.

The recent National Disarmament Conference organised by the British Peace Committee, took a big step toward ending the divisions that exist in Britain. The thing now is to see them off altogether. It is not now a question of another thirty-three years development of the struggle for peace, but of fixing the date when we can say: 'It is no longer necessary—we have won!' Otherwise long before the thirty-three years is up we shall have lost; and the survivors will have learned too late that the luxury of endless debate

*Building labour employed directly by a local Council on its own constructions, instead of contracting the work out to private firms.

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and argument between people who want the same thing has cost too much.

Khrushchov's proposals give us just the opportunity we need to end the arguments. All the dishonest trickery of erecting obstacles (control and inspection difficulties, and so on) can be swept aside. Indeed, in their panic the war propagandists let slip a gem for us all to seize upon, *'Disarmament means slump'*. Is that so? Then let every trade union in every land work out a programme and policy for its own industry based on a world without arms. Let everybody's Trades Union Congress present these programmes to the governments. Let the international trade union movement heal the breach; let it work out a programme to eliminate the label 'underdeveloped country'.

Let us see who is afraid of disarmament. Alongside this let the peace movement maintain the firmest unity in directing attention to the danger spots as they arise in order to corner and defeat all the war madmen. Let the conviction burn into our minds that we shall all live in the year when war is abolished for ever.

LABOUR MONTHLY TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO

AGAINST BANS

(Here are some extracts from a Trade Union Problems questionnaire, one point of which was on the Trades Union Congress's newly-imposed bans.)

From a railway branch secretary:

The 'Black Circular' is only worthy of the contempt which is growing in an alarming manner, amongst even the most dependable of the old guard adherents, and is typical of the bankrupt ideas of our T.U.C. leaders. Heresy hunting is an old game of a bankrupt civilisation, and is typical of the mediaeval thinking of a type which ought to be living in that age...

H. Holt (Secretary, A.S.L.E.F., Ardsley).

From a Durham miners' lodge delegate:

I think this is a serious mistake and will defeat its own object. My experience has been that local trade union branches will support the very men General Council are trying to ban...

R. Pigford (Ryhope Lodge, Co. Durham).

(*Labour Monthly*, April, 1935.)

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SEDATIVES OR SOCIALISM?

R. W. Wright*

THE Labour Party today has two choices. It can retain its identity as the party pledged to introduce a new system of society based on the economic policies of socialism, with full social services, including education, development of sport and culture and freedom from the threat of unemployment. Alternatively it can become a party claiming to be able to manage capitalism better than the capitalists, promising legislation to alleviate hardship and to assist those in need. The rank and file activists in the Labour Party and the trade unions should recognise what these alternatives mean, and, more important, the implications of the policies advocated by Gaitskell, Jay and others, and supported, I suspect, by the 'Knights' of the Trades Union Congress.

Socialism is not a sedative that can be applied to a capitalist system, but a system of economic ownership by the people. Clause 4 of the Labour Party Constitution provides the basic platform upon which the economics of socialism must be built. The development of industry in the interests of the nation can only be carried out in a planned economy. The motive power behind this development can only be the interests of the community. The job of the Labour Party is to base its whole policy on the public ownership of industry, with the workers in each industry concerned and the community at large playing a major part in the day to day administration. That —and not the state capitalism to which the present nationalised industries are committed. Listening to the so-called new thinkers you would suppose that the enormous developments of the new Socialist democracies were non-existent; but it is a fact that, under a capitalist system, none could have been developed to the extent which is now apparent. So it is not sufficient to say that Britain is today a highly organised industrial country which cannot be compared with the Socialist countries. Those who argue that the proposals to amend Clause 4 are put forward as an up-to-date alternative, must take into account such modern economic developments. The fact is that without a policy for common ownership as the economic basis for socialism, the Labour Party would be no better than the Liberal Party and suffer the same fate.

No doubt the very experienced tightrope walkers of the right-wing will conjure up all sorts of bogies to justify their demands and

*Mr. Wright, as many of our readers will know, is the secretary of the Stockport District of the Amalgamated Engineering Union, and a leading member of the Labour Party in North-West England.—Ed., *L.M.*

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be able to count on block votes controlled by leaders of many not-so-democratic unions. We shall be subjected to the usual coercive pressures of presenting to the public a united front with no splits. No effort will be spared to convince the party that public opinion will not accept public ownership as the mainstay of electoral policy. *Industry and Society* set out the conditions under which public ownership would be considered based on the taking over of industries or factories that were 'failing the nation'. By what yardstick failure will be measured is left to the imagination, as are the implications of amending Clause 4 to remove the committal to public ownership. I feel that the Labour Party is being asked to accept a policy where the next Labour Government would act as the Good Samaritan doling out aid to industries which had been bled dry by profit seekers. The cartels and monopolies would presumably be left to maintain their stranglehold on our economic life and from time to time would be given aid by loans or grants to finance new industrial ventures. The profits of these industries would remain in the hands of the owners with no return, other than interest payments, on the investment of the taxpayers' money, the bulk of it from the working class.

I believe general and by-elections were lost because the working class lost faith in the Labour Party following years of apathetic and half-hearted performance by the parliamentary leadership, which apparently could agree more often than it would disagree with the Tories. Possibly the most commonly used phrase during the General Election was that there was 'no difference between them'. Presumably after this wonderful performance we are going to be asked to accept a common front with the Tories on major political issues and disagree with them on the division of national income and the introduction of reform.

Do you want a socialist future in Britain? Are you prepared to see the socialist heart carved out of the Labour Party? If your answer is 'No', then you must oppose those reformers who do. Every constituency and divisional Labour Party and more particularly every trade union branch must ensure that their annual conferences, their executives and the Executive of the Labour Party are told so in no uncertain terms.

The alternative is for the Labour Party to reaffirm its Socialist ideals and to prepare a five-year plan for the next Parliament, and to present quite clearly to the British people its objectives, both short and long term.

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VIEWS OF THE WORLD

[Interesting letters received from readers are printed below, on which we invite others to comment. Councillor Walters' contribution, for example, is highly controversial on a fundamentally important subject; and we feel many will wish to answer the question he raises.—Ed., L.M.]

A Calculated Risk

HOW many socialists employed in heavy manual work (I am a miner), even if we have facilities, can summon the energy to make their own social, political and economic analysis. The physical exactions called for in industry in return for the blood money of the capitalist class, leaves the worker a sodden, sweaty, dissipated rag-of-a-man at the end of the shift and at the week-end, when he is just beginning to feel human again, 'Black Monday' comes and with it the back-breaking toil is resumed. So much for the 'affluent society' of the Gaitskells, Browns, Jays and Francis Williams. The upshot is that we have to leave most of the thinking to men like R. P. Dutt (probably the most profound socialist thinker of the day) who we can trust. But there comes a time in a miner's life when the inevitable injury lays him up for a spell, which gives the old sweaty brain-box time to dry out. The sweep of the newly-found refreshing health, glowing in spite of the injury's pain, all over the body gives him an urge for intellectual pursuits. True, badly equipped and that is where the element of risk comes in. I have been laid off seven weeks now through injury. In Gaitskell's affluent society I receive less than half-pay—Industrial Injuries Benefit, which brings the 'wolf' sniffing round the door. Yet, the rigours of brutal exploitation conditions an attitude of foolhardiness which, when coupled with the newly-found exhilarating glow of health, inclines one to take risks. I am going to stick my neck out and put down a few economic observations which I claim nullifies the old socialist concept of impending capitalist slump—though the nature of the beast remains unchanged.

So let us take a look at the fourteen post-war years, a period over which the British capitalist system has continued to operate with only *minor tremors of slump.* What do we find? We see that never in the history of the system have so many workers been exploited at the same time. Yet there has not been a major slump. That suggests the Marxist thesis of surplus value accumulation leading to a breakdown in the system is no longer valid. Does it? Let us go on. For the earlier years (six or seven) of the period under review, we had a ready made three-pronged answer to explain away the phenomenon. They were—the shortages caused by the war; the absence of our chief competitors, viz. Germany and Japan, from the world markets; the arms race which followed the notorious Fulton speech of 1946. No one in his right mind will deny the importance of these factors but for some years now only the latter has applied. I believe the armaments programme does help capitalism to keep going by reducing the capacity of consumer goods and widening the home market *vis-à-vis* the workers and machines engaged in the armaments industry who would otherwise be unemployed. But by itself the armaments programme

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cannot solve the internal contradictions of capitalism. As a consequence of Keynes other measures have been devised that provide necessary regulatory checks to a developing slump situation. What are they? First, can we agree that a major slump can develop out of either an unchecked inflationary trend or a deflationary one? That being so, the key to the success of the capitalist economists is the much more commanding role of government administration in the economy. This role is made easier today by the monopoly dominated character of the economy and the active participation of the monopolists in the government. These people use their political and economic power to check inflation from the centre by such regulatory measures as high taxation (income and purchase), a high bank rate and the credit squeeze. Deflation is countered by expansion (civic and industrial); the channelling of more consuming capacity (phew! is this heresy) to the nation through the media of increased wages and pensions—small to the individual but *in toto* a hefty sum—and cuts in taxation. Subsidies too and the health service help in that direction.

Those are my observations. What they imply is that a delicate balance reflected by market changes gives the capitalist economists time to make the adjustments necessary for staving off a major crisis. My analysis may be wrong but rightly or wrongly stated, if it stimulates and provokes a *Labour Monthly* discussion no harm to the socialist movement will be done.

P. C. WALTERS.

(Mr. Walters, as many of our readers will know, is a Fife County Councillor and works in Bowhill Pit.)

A Miner's View

LISTENING to arguments by right-wing Labour as to why the Party should lose its 'class image', get rid of the word 'nationalisation', and drop like a hot potato all this talk about common ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange, one would conclude that throughout the last three electoral defeats, the Labour Party had ardently portrayed themselves as a class party and tenaciously fought for nationalisation as described in Clause 4.

If so, then I have been going around in a trance for the last ten years since I first took an interest in politics. Could it be that the Labour Party had a socialist policy and I did not realise it? The thought of documents like *A Challenge to Britain; Industry and Society* and people like Morrison bleating that socialism is 'a sense of social responsibility for things of social concern' was sufficient to clear my head and get my feet back on the ground. And if we study the kind of nationalisation which they did carry through, then we discover that it was a very poor substitute for the ideas in Clause 4.

Let us examine the mining industry which passed into a state of nationalisation in 1947, but with many of the old gang who did not even believe in nationalisation left in control. A rate of compensation to the ex-owners was set which has been crippling the industry ever since, and incidentally this money is still being paid for pits long closed. They made the National Coal Board pay for the importing of American coal which over the years amounted to £10 millions. Even more serious, however, because of the government-imposed price policy the N.C.B. had to sell coal to the big industrialists

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at a price less than the cost of production. On top of all this, they had to get money for capital investments from the financiers at the normal high rate of interest; the industry received no government subsidies as some people think.

Instead of socialist nationalisation we got state ownership, and since the state is a capitalist state, the ownership is capitalist state ownership. Therefore the mass of the British people have not had the opportunity of deciding for or against socialist nationalisation. Indeed, all the discussion around Clause 4 is now designed to shed the last vestige of socialist principles from the Labour Party.

Who is right, who is wrong? The kind of forces that are rallying behind Gaitskell is proof enough for me. I think it was Bob Smillie who said, 'When the Tory press is praising you, you have gone wrong, but when they are criticising you, you are doing right by the class you represent'.

GEORGE BOLTON.

Fishcross, Alloa.

Paying for Roads and Rails

THEY threaten once more to increase railway fares to make them more 'economic'. Let us, then, take a glance at some features of 'economics' of road and rail transport.

There are nearly 10,000 miles of roads on which transport can travel. How are they maintained and how paid for? Here are a few of the items which go to the upkeep. The street surfaces, widening, roundabouts, By-pass roads, cats eyes, white lines, red reflectors, crossings, road signs, traffic lights, street and road naming, lighting, gravel in frosty weather, snow clearing in winter, police on point duty, school children's guides at crossings, footbridges and underground crossings, bus shelters etc. All this is paid for either out of the rates or from grants from the National Exchequer. The public are now accustomed to these payments and pay them with what grace they can muster. Now, is not all this just good for all *private* transport? They choose what goods they will take and to make matters worse quite a number of C licences are granted so that private firms can run their own vans.

The first charge on the railways is the interest which has to be paid to former shareholders. The sums which were paid for the railways were much in excess of their real worth. First because of long years of neglect, then the war damage. Another drawback is the fact that the railways are 'managed' by people who do not know their job or by people who do not want nationalisation to be too much of a success. It must be remembered that on the railways, every nut and bolt, every sleeper, all the necessary lighting, painting the names of the stations is charged on the account. Bridges, level crossings, signalmen (not police on point duty). Then there are the the factories where the engines, carriages, trucks, and the many things that are needed are made. If only a proportion of the moneys which are readily granted to road transport was expended on the railways, it would not be necessary to raise fares, which is now threatened. Then again with the gigantic machinery we can now use, the system of canals in use should be opened up properly and a good network made. Our engineers could arrange these in conjunction with the conservation of water and thus prevent floods.

W. H. GARDNER.

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FAILURE OF 'MIXED ECONOMY'

1. *The Cost of 'Managing' Capitalism*

John Eaton

THE ghost of a myth is haunting Britain—the myth that capitalism now is reformed and no longer is the old devil it was. The story runs something like this. Once upon a time there was a wicked monster called capitalism that made the waters of economic life surge turbulently with tidal waves that every so often engulfed some millions of the people with unemployment and destitution. And then came a fairy prince called Keynes who whispered to the rulers of the people the secret of eternal prosperity and from then on the streams of economic life flowed happily ever after and socialists who had said that the capitalist monster must be killed, made friends with the new kind monster. They agreed not to kill him and said that socialism was not any more to be an economic question and would instead be just a moral question.

Now, however, I think the pantomime is drawing to a close and we are all beginning again to sense some of the deeper realities of the economy in which we live. It was Douglas Jay who just before the war in his *The Socialist Case* seized on Keynesian theory in order to re-bush socialist economics and remove the corner-stone of the socialist economy, namely, planned production for use based upon public ownership of the means of production. In its place he put the theory of the 'mixed economy', retaining a private-ownership and production-for-profit sector, with a guiding control exercised by the state according to Keynesian principles. This theory of the 'mixed economy' has become the official doctrine of the right wing of the Labour movement. (Its most authoritative and recent re-statement by a right wing group of top Labour economists is to be found in the Penguin booklet published in 1956 under the title *Twentieth Century Socialism.*) The practical expression of this theory is opposition to further nationalisation except on a very limited scale, *e.g.*, perhaps the steel industry.

Whilst one cannot deny existence to 'the *theory* of the mixed economy', history, it must straight away be stressed, denies existence to the 'mixed economy' as an actual social formation. Either private property, the market and production for profit predominates —in which case the so-called mixed economy is capitalism (even though other property forms are contained within the social organ-

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ism as a whole). Or, if public ownership, planning and production for use predominates, then the economic formation is socialist (even though some private property forms remain). The term 'mixed economy' as a characterisation of the contemporary British economy is a highly misleading, 'fig-leaf' expression because it suggests a *laissez-faire* capitalist sector modified by admixture with a socialist sector. This is not the reality. Capitalist property and productive relations still determine the character of the economy. The nature of British capitalism has certainly greatly changed since the nineteenth century by the emergence of the big monopolies that predominate over the whole economy including the much enlarged economic functions of the state. The term 'state monopoly capitalism' is, therefore, one that more accurately takes account of the new features of the British economy.

The 'new' proposals therefore amount to living with capitalism for the rest of our lives. Before looking forward to the new decade of the 1960's it would be well to look back to the decade that is past, for this was a decade of this new so-called mixed economy, which, if we drop Clause 4, we are asked to be tied up with for ever and ever.

In the early part of this period, it was generally believed that there was much tangible evidence to support the claims of capitalism to have acquired a 'new look'. Today most opinion is far more hesitant in its judgment. The whole of the capitalist world is in a phase of expansion such as one would normally expect to allay doubts, but instead, even if hardly anyone now expects a dramatic collapse, there is a growing uneasiness about the economic future of Britain and the capitalist world generally. This is due, I think, to the accumulation of a number of reasons—very different in kind—for questioning the fundamental soundness of the economy. The kind of things I have in mind are the recent increase in the bank rate, fears of balance of payments problems and inflation, Professor Mellman's Report on the backwardness of European machine tool industries in comparison with the Soviet Union, the Soviet Union's astounding achievement with moon rockets coupled with sudden awareness of the small number of our university students and the deficiencies of our technical and scientific education, the meagreness of our research expenditure except through the state for destructive purposes, the spate of take-over bids, mergers and constantly swelling values of company shares dealt in on the Stock Exchange, the preponderance of car and consumer durable production in the post-war industrial expansion, the stagnation of

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coal and shipbuilding, the growing emphasis on problems of selling as against those of production and the tying up of increasing resources (following the pattern of the U.S. economy) in hire-purchase finance, advertising and other non-productive services, the long stagnation of private manufacturing expenditure on new plant and equipment only just now beginning to end after eighteen months in an overall phase of expansion, the brawling between the Common Market and the European Free Trade Area, the prospective surplus in supplies of most primary products and the consciousness that the weakness of the primary producers as sellers is bound to reappear in their weakness as buyers from the main manufacturing countries. It is a whole chain of continuing incidents none of which in itself is of conclusive significance that is stripping capitalism of its pretensions to have overcome its debilitating contradictions.

The recent increase of the bank rate to 5 per cent has been justified mainly by reference to the internal needs of the economy, to avoid 'over-heating' internally—and, indeed, it is bound to have the effect of damping down our economic activity, holding back housing and other social service expenditures requiring borrowed capital, and generally checking mass consumption. However, it is fairly certain that the main consideration in raising the bank rate just at this time was the external balance of payments situation. Interest rates have been increased in Germany and the U.S.A. and this is creating a certain financial pressure against London which the increased bank rate is designed to correct. However, it is understandable that the authorities are not anxious to stress this aspect. The balance of payments crises in 1951 and 1957 emphasised the subordination of the British economy to financial interests and financial policy and this is still how things are, despite the government's desire to give the impression that the rebuilt gold and dollar reserves have put the economy on a new solid basis. It is in fact the Achilles heel of managed capitalism that is being revealed in Britain's internal and external financial problems. Externally British capitalism has committed itself to maintaining the value of the £ and freeing it from controls and is likely to cling to this policy (even at the cost of great harm to economic activity in Britain), in order to protect its traditional advantages in overseas banking, commerce and investment.

At home it is, of course, true that the state can do quite a number of things to stimulate economic activity, but all such measures must in a predominantly private-profit economy cause inflationary tendencies which are liable to cause a disintegration of

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the whole social fabric if not checked. Consequently there now is to be seen in a number of leading capitalist countries the phenomenon of the state oscillating between contradictory policies and being as much concerned about applying brakes to prevent inflation as stimuli to prevent stagnation and unemployment.

The contradictions between monetary policy and productive policy in a capitalist economy were also reflected clearly enough in the report of the Radcliffe Committee. Of course the defence of managed capitalism argues as if these contradictions of state policy torn between the needs of financial stability and economic growth were in fact skillful steering by a helmsman using Keynesian techniques to pilot the ship of state through dangerous waters necessitating frequent changes of course. It is as well therefore to be more concrete about the cost of this performance.

Experience in periods of expansion shows that an annual rate of expansion of 8 per cent in industrial production can be quite easily attained. Japan and West Germany in the fifties averaged 15 per cent and 9 per cent per annum respectively—exceptionally high *average* rates for capitalist economies over prolonged periods but demonstrating incidentally that there are no technical problems about sustaining industrial growth at around about 10 per cent per annum. Incidentally the growth of the West German economy was nothing to do with the techniques of managed capitalism or the mixed economy. It was an economy in which there was an abundant supply of exploitable labour and a minimum of control over capital and market activities and it has enjoyed in common with West Europe as a whole, a boom of which the main basis was heavy capital expenditure on post-war re-equipment of civilian industry. Now the momentum of private investment on re-equipment is slowing down in most capitalist countries and this foreshadows problems in the handling of which those who profess ability to 'manage capitalism' have yet to prove themselves in practice. If through the sixties we were steadily each year to maintain an 8 per cent rate of growth in Britain we would double our industrial product in ten years. Supposing state expenditure remained unchanged (which if disarmament were to become a reality would mean a large increase in social service expenditure) this would permit simultaneously a hundred and fifty per cent increase in investment expenditure and a seventy-five per cent increase in consumer goods. Allowing for increased population and additions to the number of productive workers, this could mean an increase in average weekly earnings from £11 a week as at present to £18 a

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week by 1969, prices remaining unchanged. In the decade that has just ended according to the official indices—and the indices reflect nothing of the qualitative aspect of conditions of life within capitalism—average real earnings and output a head increased by one-fifth each, industrial production increased by just over a quarter and consumption expenditure per head (at constant prices) by fifteen per cent. These figures give some means of measuring the cost of the financial trimming that is necessary to 'manage capitalism'.

(To be concluded)

MASSACRE!

'. . . We asked them for a life of toilsome earning,
They bade us bide their leisure for our bread;
We craved to speak to tell our woeful learning:
We come back speechless, bearing back our dead.
Not one, not one, nor thousands must they slay,
But one and all if they would dusk the day.

They will not learn; they have no ears to hearken.
They turn their faces from the eyes of fate;
Their gay-lit halls shut out the skies that darken.
But, lo! this dead man knocking at the gate.
Not one, not one, nor thousands must they slay,
But one and all if they would dusk the day . . .'

(William Morris, after Bloody Sunday, Trafalgar Square, 1887.)

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IF SHARKS WERE HUMAN

Bertolt Brecht

[*We have pleasure in printing this fable. It has been especially translated for* Labour Monthly *from BERTOLT BRECHT 'Kalendergeschichten' (published by Gebrüder Weiss Verlag Berlin-Schöneberg). The German title is: 'Wenn die Haifische Menschen wären'*].

MR. C., if sharks were human beings, would they be nicer to the little fishes?', asked the little girl.

'Yes, indeed', replied Mr. C., 'they would build great big boxes for the little fishes, with all sorts of food, both vegetable and animal. They would take care that the boxes always had fresh water, and they would make the necessary sanitary arrangements. And when for example a little fish hurt his fin, they would bandage it for him, so that the sharks should not lose him before his time.

'To stop the little fishes getting unhappy, they would give big water fêtes now and then, for happy fishes taste better than unhappy ones.

'There would of course be schools in the big boxes, where the little fishes would learn how to swim into the shark's mouth. They would need geography, too, so that they could find the big lazy sharks hanging about.

'The most important thing, of course, would be the moral education of the little fishes; they would be taught that the greatest and most beautiful thing for little fishes is to sacrifice themselves joyfully, and that they should all have faith in the sharks, especially when they promised them a happy future. The little fishes would be taught that this future would not be safe unless they learnt obedience, and that they must guard against all low, materialist, selfish, or marxist tendencies, and report to the sharks immediately when any of their fellows showed any such tendencies.

'If sharks were human, they would of course wage war with one another, to conquer foreign boxes and foreign fishes. They would have these wars carried on by their own little fishes, and would teach them that there were tremendous differences between them and the little fishes of other sharks. Little fishes, they would explain, are well known to be dumb, but they are silent in many different languages and therefore cannot possibly understand one another. To every little fish that killed one or two other little fishes in war—enemy fishes who are silent in other languages—they

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would give a little Order made out of seaweed, and the title of Hero.

'If sharks were human, they would naturally develop Art; there would be beautiful pictures, in which the sharks' teeth would have magnificent colours, and their jaws would look just like pleasure-gardens, in which one could have lovely romps. The theatres on the bed of the sea would show heroic little fishes swimming into the sharks' jaws, and the music would be so lovely that all the little fishes, led by the band, would stream dreamily into the sharks' jaws, full of the happiest thoughts.

'There would be religion too. It would teach little fishes that their real life would only begin in the shark's belly. And besides, if sharks were human, it would no longer be true, as it is at present, that all little fishes are equal. Some of them would get appointments and would be set over others; and those who were a little bigger would be allowed to eat the smaller ones. That would be all right for the sharks, for they would often get bigger pieces to eat themselves. And the bigger ones, who had jobs, would keep the smaller ones in order; they would be teachers, officers, box-building-engineers, and so on.

'In short, there would be real civilisation in the sea, if sharks were human beings.'

ALWYN MACHEN

1901 — 1960

Alwyn Machen, President of the Yorkshire Area of the National Union of Mineworkers, died on March 1, 1960. Son of a Derbyshire miner, and starting work at the pit himself at the age of 13, he became oustanding amongst his fellow miners in Yorkshire, where he served successively as union branch official, compensation secretary and president. But for his untimely death he would have been national President of the miners, to which post he had just been elected. Our readers will recall his article 'The Miners: A re-appraisal', which he wrote for us in April, 1958. His latest article appeared only six months ago, in October, 1959, on 'The Rise and Growth of the Chinese Trade Unions', soon after his return from China.—ED., L.M.

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'TAKE-OVER BID' FOR ISRAEL

Lazar Zaidman

WE are in a period when everywhere in the capitalist world there is talk, at least, about assisting the economic development of the backward and under-developed countries. Opportunities open up for all kind of investors, and one may forgive a smile, if in some cases, a virtue is made out of—not the classical 'necessity'—but the advantages expected to follow investment.

These thoughts come to mind as one reads about the establishment of the Anglo-Israel Securities Ltd. Throughout last year, leading figures in the London financial world were investigating the possibilities of investing their capital in Israel. Assurances were sought that investments and profits would be safe-guarded, and that there would be no repetition of the situation when:

> A number of people, to put it mildly, have burned their fingers, through lack of objective information on the state of Israeli companies. (*Jewish Observer and Middle East Review*, July 17, 1959.)

The new company is sponsored by four of the best known merchant bank houses in the City of London (Samuel Montagu, N. M. Rothschild, M. Samuel, and S. G. Warburg.) Among the signatories to the prospectus are Sir Henry D'Avigdor Goldsmid, Tory M.P.; Edmund de Rothschild; Harold Lever, Labour M.P.; Peter Samuel; Charles Seligman; and Lord Swaythling.

The Jewish Observer and Middle East Review, the organ of the British Zionist Federation, writes in alluring terms:

> For the first time, the most representative and respected City names are in effect underwriting sterling area investments in Israel. It is considered by them sufficiently safe and attractive to make them recommend Israeli stocks to the British investor as good business.

And for the Jewish investor:

> This marks the first stage of the transition from donation to genuine investment. Israel is now considered a good risk. It is no longer something which the investor has to treat as a donation for which he will see no return. (November 27, 1959.)

Presumably, workers in Britain, Jews and non-Jews alike are expected to take pride in the fact that, according to Harold Lever, M.P., writing in the same journal:

> Israel now takes her place for the first time as one of the areas for normal investment from this country by the general public.

Israel has:

> Ample cadres of talent and skill which are only partially exploited at present, because of inadequate capital.

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But the 'ample cadres' have their spirit broken by long years of unemployment. In a book* just published, Dr. F. Zweig points out that Israel has very large unemployment, both open and disguised, which amounts to more than one-fourth of the total manpower. For these unemployed there is no unemployment pay. Consequently, Dr. Zweig's guess is: 'that about one-third of Israel's population . . . leads an existence below the poverty line'.

> As to the rejection of the institution of unemployment insurance, the motives behind it are based on the fact that there is no lack of work in Israel, in the Negev, or the Galilee, or in border settlements. Anyone able and willing to work need not suffer starvation, and can count on full support and all possible help from the respective authorities in Israel. The layer of *Lumpenproletariat,* of the parasitic sector of the population, and generally speaking, of the unproductive classes in Israel, is large enough, and the tendency to sit under a palm tree and to watch the clear blue skies seems to be quite real, so that any encouragement of this tendency by unemployment benefits may be dangerous to Israel's future. (p. 99-100)

In this comment there is no intention to ignore, discount or minimise the extent of the charitable assistance which some of the promoters of this Company have given to Israel since it was established as a State—nor dismiss the uses some of the schemes envisaged in the prospectus of the new Company will have for the ultimate economic development of Israel. But one may be forgiven if one uses the opportunity to point out that it will be Jewish 'sweat and toil' which will be creating 'satisfactory' profits for Jewish capitalists who have waited for the opportune time to invest their capital in Israel—sure of safe and big returns. The dreams of Theodor Herzl, founder of the modern Zionist Movement, are certainly coming true for Jewish investors. Outlining the perspective for the rich Jews in the prospective Jewish State, he wrote:

> Rich Jews who are now obliged carefully to secrete their valuables, and to hold their dreary banquets behind lowered curtains, will be able to enjoy their possessions in peace 'over there'. If they co-operate in carrying out this emigration scheme, the capital will be rehabilitated there, and will have served to promote an unexampled undertaking. If rich Jews begin to rebuild in the new settlement their mansions which are stared at in Europe with such envious eyes, it will soon become fashionable to live over there in beautiful modern houses. (*The Jewish State,* p. 41.)

Some months ago, the Israel Parliament passed a law for a new series of concessions to foreign investors. Tax exemptions are the main features of this law. Any foreign enterprise, approved by the Israeli Investment Centre, would be exempt from the *company income tax* for a period of five years from the first year of taxable

*The Israeli Worker by Dr. Ferdynand Zweig. Herzl Press and Sharon Books. New York, 1959. pp. 305. Index. Price $5.

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income. Foreign investors will not pay tax on dividends beyond those taxes which are paid by the Company. An accelerated rate of depreciation is granted to approved enterprises, as well as exemptions from urban and rural taxes for periods of from five to ten years; and unrestricted right to transfer all Israel-earned profits out of Israel into foreign currency. Foreign investors are also exempted from property taxes, custom duties and purchase tax.

Foreign investors hitherto could export only 10 per cent of their profits: this will now be raised to the full 100 per cent. In the four years to 1958, under the old per cent law, they extracted $55 million —more than a third of the amount invested during that period.

Foreign financial circles are growing more confident that the employers can enormously reduce the preponderant influence of Histradut—the single trade union centre in Israel, owner of many enterprises operating in large parts of the Israeli economy, which enjoys a dominating position in contracting transport and heavy industry and is responsible for about a third of all Israel's economic activity. Strains and stresses in this sphere, already visible, strengthen the confidence of the capitalist class. When allowance is made for State and municipal undertakings and projects operated by communal institutions, the private sector is left in control of only little over a quarter of the Israeli economy. These 'take-over' efforts will mean increased exploitation for the working people of Israel, who will hardly feel happier at the thought that they are providing huge profits to, albeit Jewish, capitalist owners.

Highly organised as they are in the Right-Wing Histradut, the Israeli working class is constantly fighting back in defence of its rights. But the employers are nibbling away at these rights and are hopefully looking forward to the weakening of the trade unions:

> The position of the unions has never been quite the same since one of the country's largest manufacturers gained an unsung victory for all employers when he sat out in 1957 a four-months strike to stop excessive wage claims and secure his right to redundancy dismissals.
>
> (*The Financial Times*, November 6, 1959.)

Employers believe that with a weakened trade union movement they can achieve their aim of reducing the standard of living of the Israeli working people, which as elsewhere is supposed to be the stumbling block to lower export prices.

But we are confident that the last word has not yet been spoken: the working people, under the leadership of their class conscious and militant sections, will succeed in maintaining their present standards and go on improving them.

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THE HISTORY OF ERNIE BEVIN, LABOUR LEADER

J. R. Campbell

ERNEST BEVIN was the outstanding right-wing trade union leader between the wars, and it was a good idea to give the writing of his life* to a professional historian, rather than to a slapdash journalistic admirer. Alas, Mr. Bullock who is in his way also an admirer, can be slapdash at times. Where, for example, did he get the following extraordinary information about the 1936 Labour Party Conference?

> Two delegates were present from the Spanish Government, one of whom, the celebrated Communist La Pasionaria, had a Scots mother, and spoke in eloquent English.

The delegate in question was from the Socialist Party of Spain, her name being Isabel de Palencia. Nevertheless, Mr. Bullock has done a competent job, relating Bevin to his background, and his book should be of some use to the critically minded. For all the outstanding periods through which the Labour movement has passed in the first forty years of this century are here, with the exception of the Munich period, when Bevin was travelling abroad for health reasons.

We have Bevin's activities in the labour upheaval which preceded the first world war; during the employers' offensive which culminated in the betrayal of the miners in 1921; in the period of the first Labour Government; in the General Strike of 1926; in the collapse of the second Labour Government and in the period when fascism was advancing remorselessly to the second world war and when the reformist leadership was paralysing the British trade union movement. This volume ends on Bevin becoming Minister of Labour in the Coalition Government in 1940. Another volume is promised dealing with Bevin as a Cabinet Minister in the Coalition and Labour Governments.

I put down the volume full of admiration for the heroic struggles of the British workers and of anger at the miserable right-wing leadership with which they were saddled. All the great betrayals brought about by the reformist leadership (though not recognised as such by Mr. Bullock) are detailed here, the betrayal of the miners in 1921 and 1926; the ignominious collapse of the Labour Government in 1931, and the furious anti-communism of the

**The Life and Times of Ernest Bevin*, by Alan Bullock. Vol. 1. Heinemann. 50s.

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General Council of the Trades Union Congress when confronted by the demands for a united front against fascism and war. Mr. Bullock defends the indefensible by supporting Bevin's attitude in all these periods. I found particularly painful the account of the disgraceful panic of the General Council who betrayed the General Strike of 1926, at the very moment when the ranks were unbroken and the spirit of fight was rising.

Ernest Bevin was basically a right-wing trade union leader, but with marked personal idiosyncrasies. He was that unusual combination, the skilful, patient organiser and negotiator, and the emotional mass orator. He could tear a passion to tatters denouncing the wrongs suffered by the lower-paid workers, and he could dramatise his opposition to the Communist Party to such an extent that his audience was invariably left with the picture of poor old Ernie, outnumbered a thousand to one, bravely and single-handedly felling the Red Hordes with a block vote. Unlike some of his contemporaries, however, he never quite forgot the role of power in trade union negotiations. Power had to be used at decisive moments to break the resistance of a recalcitrant group of employers and to win concessions. His basic perspective was that of a trade union movement slowly strengthening itself, and by unremitting pressure, winning a greater recognition within capitalist society. He never took risks, however. In the years of depression his policy was to minimise wage cuts, rather than use the organisation in all-out resistance. He could be a formidable opponent in negotiation with the employers on some trade questions: he could be fooled by them on wider issues.

The classic example of this was his wholehearted participation in the movement of class co-operation of union leaders and the more intelligent employers which followed the betrayal of the General Strike. Those employers aimed to catch the trade union leaders on the rebound, and to encourage them to believe that more was to be gained by measures of co-operation than by the use of trade union power. This movement known at Mondism (from Sir Alfred Mond of the Imperial Chemical Industries, who was the best known of the employers' group) happily discussed the recognition of trade unions, the setting up of negotiating machinery, co-operation of unions and employers in the promotion of rationalisation in capitalist industry. A fierce drive was conducted by the right-wing against all Lefts who opposed this movement. The right-wing and their associates among the employers arrived at a number of vague declarations but the powerful employers' organi-

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sations like the British Employers' Confederation, were cagey and after the outbreak of the economic crisis of 1929-33, Mondism faded away. The employers' organisations wanted wage cuts and speed-up and not vague phrases about co-operation. But it was always exceedingly difficult to get Bevin to admit that he could possibly have been wrong. At the Trades Union Congress in Bristol in 1931 after the fall of the second Labour Government and after the attack on the workers' wages had commenced, he defended his attitude against criticism. 'I say that if there had been a vigorous application in grasping the idea of rationalisation, as I appealed to the movement to do then we should not be whining about it now'. This was characteristic of the man to the end of his days. If any of his foolish, half-baked notions proved to be wrong, this was always due to some demoniac force, the financiers, or the Communists, or the American Jews or the Russians getting in the way of his entirely beneficent plans. His best laid plans were continually being sabotaged by sinister interests. He loved to tell conferences how he was always being 'stabbed in the back' or 'crucified' by people who opposed him.

Characteristic of this far from endearing trait was his attitude to the Communists, which grew out of an unofficial dock strike in 1923. The previous year Bevin had accepted a wage cut in two stages, the first in 1922 and the second in 1923. When the time came for the second wage cut, there was a brief flash of industrial prosperity and the dockers saw no reason why they should accept the cut. A strike in Hull was followed by strikes elsewhere. Bevin would never admit that it was the bad wage agreement of 1922 which provoked the strike and not the activity of the handful of Communists in the docks. When at the end of the strike a number of Transport and General Union members formed the Stevedores Union the Communists were blamed, although they had opposed the breakaway. So in later years, at the drop of a hat, Ernie was ready to trace the iniquities of the Communists in his union from the year 1923 onwards.

Compared with other routine-ridden trade union officials he had a lively mind. In his mature years he read little except labour movement documents, but picked up whatever ideas were going the rounds by listening and by conversation, and then thought out his own position. Apart from his trade union knowledge, which was profound, he knew a little bit of everything but nothing very much. Though basically a right-winger he always sought to be

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a little different than anyone else in his expressed ideas. Taking as he did a lot of his ideas from his entourage, he was, from the capitalist point of view, the best man possible for Foreign Secretary in the post-war Labour Government, though no doubt he thought some of the ideas which the permanent officials imparted to him as his very own. In steering him on the required direction, the permanent official's task was eased by his chronic anti-Communism. However, this volume does not deal with that later period.

I put down this interesting volume with one impression that Mr. Bullock certainly did not intend to convey. Throughout this period there was an alternative policy industrially and politically to the right-wing policy pursued by Bevin. That was provided by the Communist Party and by the Left workers who associated with it during the great events covered by this book. The Communists are treated by Mr. Bullock as 'noises off', as people whom his hero occasionally took a swipe at. What they stood for except 'militancy' and 'extremism' is never mentioned.

All the more reason why in the year of the fortieth anniversary of the Communist Party we should bring that alternative policy to light.

BOOKS

Our Fight for Canada (Selected Writings 1923-1959)

Tim Buck

Progress Books, Canada. 408pp.

IF you travel from one side of Canada to the other you will find no name held in greater respect than that of Tim Buck, the general secretary of the Canadian Communist Party. From the formation of the party he has been in the leadership. He has led discussions, in groups, on the executive, and in party Conventions. In these discussions he has given well-thought-out and valuable views on trade union questions, on Canadian domestic policy, on international affairs, and on French Canada as a nation federated to Canada as a whole. Now many of these fine Marxist contributions to Canadian and world affairs have been collected and published under the title *Our Fight for Canada.*

While Canada is a British Dominion it has always been strongly influenced by American capitalism and of course, by the henchmen of the big American monopolists, the leaders of the American Federation of Labour. This created a truly complicated situation in the trade union movement of Canada and posed many problems, in the early days for the socialist movement, and later on for the Communist Party.

Reading the early part of this book, the reader will see the sinister part that John L. Lewis played in connection with miners' unions. Then there was the planting of agents, by the employers, in real Yankee style.

After the great strike of the miners in 1909 two men loaded with rum

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started a fight at a branch meeting. In the course of the fight the branch secretary shot them. He was arrested for murder but was soon liberated. He was an agent of the mine-owners, just as the two drunks were but they had not been made aware of their respective roles. Twenty years later it was Tim Buck they were shooting at, but they shot another comrade in mistake for him. It has been a long, hard and uphill battle, in the great dominion, that is here made clear.

The party was formed at a Convention in 1922 but owing to the law as it stood, it could not take the name of the Communist Party, it started as The Workers' Party of Canada. Two years later it changed over to an open Communist Party. Then in the thirties, when it was raided and its leaders arrested, it legalised itself as the Labour Progressive Party. In the late thirties, during the economic crisis, Mackenzie King set up a Royal Commission to go into the question of Dominion and Provincial Relations. On this Tim Buck can tell us, in a powerful section dealing with the fight against monopolies, that 'The only political party which submitted a brief to the royal commission setting forth a documented analysis of the source of the crisis and a full programme of constitutional reform was the Communist Party of Canada'. Following this section comes the unceasing campaign for a National Front in the bitter fight against Fascism and war. Here they came up against much the same difficulties as we experienced here in Britain. In this part there is a spirited exposure and condemnation of imperialism, in a speech which Tim made from the dock during the trial of the eight Communist Party leaders. In the course of the trial Tom McEwen, one of the accused, was asked while in the witness box 'if he had ever been in a union that did not have a strike'. The idea being to discredit militant action, or make it a reason for a verdict of guilty on the charge of advocating force and violence. Yet about this time the leader of the Co-operative Commonwealth Party, a sort of Canadian Labour Party, was following the lead of our own right-wingers by declaring that militant action was responsible for 'provoking fascism'. These so-called socialists not only rejected all attempts to get a united front against fascism, on the contrary, they did everything to encourage fascism by their policy of disarming the working class.

Now they have given up all pretence of being socialists and have become confirmed believers, or confirmed opportunists, in the desire to accommodate themselves to the wishes and the policies of the bourgeoisie. In this situation the party had its share of the revisionists who wanted to emasculate the party. Six members of the Quebec provincial committee resigned from the party, in a bloc, causing, but only for a very short time, a somewhat confused state in the Quebec area. But the party got over this disturbance very quickly and it was not very long before the revisionists exposed their real anti-working class character. Tim Buck gives a masterly treatment of revisionism, in the course of which he quotes Lenin where the latter says, 'The dialectics of history were such that the theoretical victory of Marxism obliged its enemies to disguise themselves as Marxists'. This was in reference to the revisionists of the Bernstein school at the beginning of the century. But the revisionists of the Tito school, the revisionists of 1950, Tim might have added, because of the victories of Marxism-Leninism have been obliged, in

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many cases, to disguise themselves as Marxist-Leninists. There are four hundred pages in this book and there is good political reading on each.

W. GALLACHER.

Notes of a Film Director

Sergei Eisenstein

Lawrence & Wishart. 208pp. 18s.

SERGEI EISENSTEIN was one of the few truly great artists of the cinema. This book, made up of articles, notes and lectures, displays, in a way that first-person writing rarely achieves, the qualities of thought and imagination that enabled him to produce such masterpieces as 'Potemkin', 'October', and 'Alexander Nevsky'. For him art and life were not separate but one. And to his branch of aesthetics, the cinema, he was devoted with the passion one expects of a great painter to his. His phrase 'this singularly beautiful and unprecedentedly attractive art'—for me, recalls the first joyful enthusiasm of working in the medium, a feeling that in many of us has to fight hard for survival, but in Eisenstein burned undimmed and challengingly to his life's end.

His descriptions of his working methods are absorbing, and important to all interested in cinema. They show his continuing technical struggle to master form in order to express content. This is true, despite the controversy that raged for a long time over the accusations against him of formalism. That these were justified, as far as some practice went, is undoubted; but never as far as intention. The article on *montage* makes this clear, not in the form of an exculpation, but as a demonstration of that most difficult of all processes for the artist, a re-thinking of his fundamental techniques. In this he was aided by his sense of humour. He says gravely 'I have a strictly academical approach to all I do', then adds (and one can almost see the twinkle), 'Very often I settle a particular problem of principle only to lose all interest in its practical application'.

The section called 'Portraits of Artists' is full of good things. There is the account of Maxim Gorki reading a draft scenario to young filmmakers, when Eisenstein realised the modesty of the great writer; he saw that his fingers *were trembling*: the Marxist analysis of the comedy of Chaplin that gives a picture as clear and pellucid as the best work of Chaplin himself: the remark that Prokofiev's method of work is 'the exactitude of Stendhal's style translated into music'.

I am dubious about the leading role he assigns to stereoscopy; but there is time for him to be proved right. On colour he should be read by all who work with it. He insists it must be a dramatic factor, not an accidental. He makes one see that what is wrong, for instance, with many cartoons is that their trees are only green because they are so in nature. But they are not necessarily so to a child, nor should they be to an artist. On acting, 'true to life acting is not copying the results of feeling but calling feelings to life'.
A treasure house, in fact for all seriously interested in cinema and what it can do. He would, this book confirms, have been a considerable artist anyhow; what makes him great was his passion to understand the world around him in all its manifestations. He did not leave his principles, his humanity, his love of peace outside the door when he entered the studio. There was no separation between the man and his work.

SIDNEY COLE.

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Socialism and Religion
Archibald Robertson
Lawrence & Wishart
3s. 6d. 64pp.

THIS is a timely and welcome contribution by a scholarly Marxist to explain the social origins and development of religion and its relation to ancient and modern thought and action, as well as to its evolution and development right up to our own times. In his short introductory remarks he explains the attitude of Marx, Engels and pioneers of socialism as ' a critical detachment from religion combined with a belief in liberty of conscience'. But 'as time went on it became evident that this detachment from religion was not enough' since 'a socialist party aims at becoming a mass party or it may as well shut up shop'; and 'whether we like it or not the fact remains that many workers are religious'. They want 'more than mere toleration; they want respect, and if they do not get it from socialists they will vote against them'. When dealing with religion it is essential that the question be approached 'not dogmatically as if a formula framed for one situation automatically fitted other situations always and everywhere, but dialectically studying the history of religion and the causes which lead to the prevalence of given religions under given conditions'. This our author proceeds to do in three sections of his essay. The first comprises the Social Origins of Religion: Judaism, Christianity and Islam; the Middle Ages; the Reformation; the English Revolution. The second deals with Humanism into Marxism: the French Revolution and after; Marxism in theory; Marxism in practice. The third covers Religion and the Labour movement: the class struggle and the churches; and a conclusion. To quote from the author's conclusion: 'The centralisation of capitalism has led to revolution in one third of the world, but also to deepening and widening international tension which threatens to bury capitalists and workers alike in common ruin. This threat offers socialists a unique opportunity to mobilise the workers in all capitalist countries against a ruling class who have degenerated from mere thieves and cheats into suicidal maniacs. It also offers a unique opportunity to win to socialism sincere believers whose religion is not a mere social and political convenience. Do they believe in peace on earth etc., or do they believe in mouthing gospel texts while the rulers whom they have elected stockpile the means of mass murder'.

Every chapter is a wonderfully condensed source of information of value to teacher, scholar, agitator in the struggle for socialism and peace.

BOB STEWART.

Spotlight on Coal
Jock Kane
Communist Party. 16pp. 6d.

THIS is an invaluable weapon in our hands in the fight for the socialist alternative as a long-term prospect and for a solution to the current crisis in its immediate application. Jock Kane's pamphlet is a timely one indeed. It gives a searching Marxist analysis of the present crisis in mining and presents practical solutions to its problems. The real reasons for the crisis, the failure of capitalism, and the drive for profits from oil, with Government encouragement, are gone into very thoroughly. Jock Kane correctly defends nationalisation and urges its extension into other vital sectors of the country's

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economy: no retreat from Socialist principles here.

The real reasons for the continual 'loss' shown in the annual accounts of the Coal Board are given—compensation charges, fantastic interest charges on money borrowed for pit development, the charge against the mining industry for coal imported from America, and now the £20 to £30 millions for stocking coal. Positive alternatives are put forward. Conference decisions of the National Union of Mineworkers are quoted: for a national fuel policy, condemnation of Tory Government policy, and opposition to pit closures. These are supported and taken a stage further by quoting Communist Party policy: beginning with the need to fight for higher wages, a shorter working day, increased holidays, improved pensions and sick pay schemes; for oil import quotas, for extended research into uses of coal, for new industries in mining areas, against conversion from coal to oil-burning apparatus —all these are systematically and forcefully advanced. He concludes by comparing capitalist and socialist methods. Capitalism with its industrial contraction, its booms and slumps, prosperity for the few, insecurity, unemployment and lower living standards for the many: Socialism with industrial expansion, a planned economy with every type of fuel given its proper share, higher living standards for everybody, shorter working hours, security and freedom from want.

GUY STUBBS.

Astronomy for Entertainment
Y. Perelman
Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow. 7s. 6d. 194pp.

WITH the imposition of the black-out during the last war, many people for the first time began to see the wonders of the heavens above in all their ever-changing beauty. This created a tremendous surge in the popular interest in astronomical studies. To cope with this flood of

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WE APOLOGISE! The demand for 1959 bound volumes has been such that our binders have again been obliged to delay delivery. They have now promised them for the second week of April. Please, be patient a little longer.

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new publications on the subject have appeared in infinite variety to suit the intellectual levels of everyone, simple or highly technical, to please child, adult, or the advanced technical student. That this was not just a local phenomenon is evident, for this book published at a very reasonable price was first written by Y. Perelman before 1942 and published in Moscow during the war. Unfortunately the author came to an untimely end during the siege of Leningrad in 1942. The text has been brought up to date in several places, for the newest satellites of Uranus, Neptune, and Jupiter, with other information discovered since that date have been inserted into the text. This book, well illustrated, presents a mass of useful, interesting, and in fact unusual information not usually associated with astronomy, yet as the author proves, definitely closely linked with our position in the Solar System, and with our complicated movements in space. It may not be everyone's idea of entertainment, for unless one likes mathematics up to the School Certificate level, and unfortunately very few people do, then the many simple mathematical calculations and formulae will be by-passed and so much of the value of the book will be lost. A few errors due to printing or translation may be found, and in some places, possibly due to the same reason the meaning is apt to be obscure. It is a pity that the author did not have the chance to write the continuation he had planned for one feels that there are to many points left uncovered in this which would have been undoubtedly dealt with in a second book.

W. A. GRANGER, F.R.A.S.

BERNARD SHAW'S ADVICE TO ADVERTISERS

July, 1941

I forget the name of the Frenchman who, on being asked what part he had taken in the French Revolution, replied that he had survived it. The survival of the *Labour Monthly* for twenty years is a feat no less remarkable. The fact that its circulation runs into five figures, making a lucrative vehicle of advertisement for books and other articles appealing to its special clientele (if only advertisers could escape from their well worn grooves) is part of the prodigy; for I have never seen *L.M.* exhibited for sale on a bookstall or otherwise pushed on the public. The five figures seem insignificant contrasted with a population figure of forty millions; but if you subtract from the forty millions the children, the aged, the adults old enough to be hopelessly set in their opinions, the people who get along with their fathers' politics and think what their Party newspapers tells them to think, the mental defectives who may be classed politically as idiots and could not understand a line of the *L.M.* if the wind blew it into their hands, leaving only, say five per cent. of the population between 16 and 30 years old (for on these alone can the *L.M.* produce any considerable effect), and you will see the five figures in quite a different light, and understand why a propaganda that counts so few disciples can produce Renaissances, Reformations and Revolutions.

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW

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(Continued from page ii of cover)

who wrote as soon as his March copy had arrived: 'This morning my great political and literary event occurred—the coming of L.M., with no beating of drums, but a presage of the approaching victory of the people's cause over the dark forces in the world. I usually cast all other reading aside for a few days—for I don't get any uninterrupted time for reading except at 4 or 5 a.m. A small cheque by return, with a strong feeling of its inadequacy'. And from a woman reader 'for many years', whose 'whole heart is with strikers everywhere', in gratitude for 'a lot of information I shouldn't get anywhere else, as well as encouragement'. Rich variety, young and old, miners, builders, engineers and doctors and other workers by brain. Reading their letters, how one feels one would like to meet them all.

And now I have a chance to meet many. For the February fund broke all records for that short month since our magazine began 39 years ago! Donations to the Out-with-the-Manager Fund have finally topped the £90 and earned us the right to claim an equal sum from our benevolent Londoner which we have triumphantly done. So in the next few months I shall be joyfully packed off out of the office into the country, to meet readers at conferences, in factories, offices and their homes, to discuss how to build a better magazine and better our efforts to increase the circulation. I can hardly wait to get the old grey van on the road, heading north out of London. Amongst them will certainly be the Lancashire man who wins new readers and builds the fund hand-in-hand. He has just written to say that he's starting a collective regular collection in two Lancashire towns 'from now on', where they have never collected 'owt' for L.M. before; and adds a post-script: 'Just off to a South African boycott meeting. I shall see the value of reading L.M. is mentioned'. A London engineer lent his copy with J. R. Scott's article on the award, to his shop steward—who then passed it on to two others. If every active reader did the same we should see the pace to progress quicken, and fast. February donations totalled:

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